THE LILAC-TAILED PARROTLET (*TOUIT BATAVICA*), A NEW RECORD FOR COLOMBIA.

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The Lilac-tailed Parrotlet has been reported in Surinam, Guyana and Venezuela and on the islands of Trinidad and Tobago. In northern Venezuela (north of the Orinoco river) the species occurs from Sucre west to Merida, and South of the Orinoco east to Bolívar (Meyer de Schauensee & Phelps, 1978). This parrot is relatively abundant in lowland forests and valleys but can extend from dry deciduous forest up to 1700 m in mountain forests. The birds are usually gregarious and have been reported in groups up to thirty or more (Forshaw, 1978). In this paper, we report the first record of *Touit batavica* for Colombia.

In July 1993, a flock of about forty of these parrots was observed at a site known as Las Tinajas, Departamento del Magdalena, which lies 450 km NW of the previously known W extreme of the species' distribution. Las Tinajas is located 20 km east of the city Santa Marta, Departamento del Magdalena, close to the main road that connects this city with Riohacha, Departamento de la Guajira. The approximate coordinates and the altitude of the site as given by a TPC map (K-26c, edition 4) are 11° 11' N and 74° 4' W and 350 m. The vegetation in this locality is a mixture of several types of forest which present different degress of human disturbance. Most of Las Tinajas contains cultivated fields and grassland, followed by patches of forest in early successional stages and relicts of the original tropical dry forest near small waterways. We observed the flock of *Touit batavica* feeding on the fruits of a *Clusia* sp. parasitizing a tree of *Anacardium* sp. During these feeding bouts, which occurred mostly in the morning, the parrots fed generally up in the 30 m crown, very silently and inconspiciously, which made them rather difficult to detect.

After repeated observations of this flock in the same area, we collected one individual of the species. To obtain a specimen, we placed pieces of wood covered with a non-toxic glue and baited with flowers and fruits inside the *Clusia* crown. Within 30 minutes, a specimen was trapped and collected. The bird proved to be an adult male in non-reproductive condition, moulting heavily on the body and wing-coverts.

Its measurements are: culmen 18.5 mm, bill length from nostril 15.4 mm, wing (closed) 115.7 mm, wing (streched and flattened) 118.0 mm, tail length 31.7 mm, tarsus 12.0 mm and wingspan 356 mm. The iris of the collected specimen was ochre-orange an its feet orange-brown. The specimen is now no. 31842 of the ornithological collection of the Instituto de Ciencias Naturales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá. The plumage of our specimen agrees with the descriptions and plates of *Touit batavica* in Forshaw (1978) and Meyer de Schauensee & Phelps (1978) except that on the greater coverts, a narrow line of red separates the blue tip from the yellow of the rest of these feathers, and there is a conspicious red spot on the innermost tertial. These characters were not unique for the specimen collected: during field observations they were also seen in individuals which could be clearly observed in the *Clusia* tree. The fact that these apparently conspicious characters are not mentioned in previous descriptions, led us to examine museum collections in The Netherlands and Venezuela.

In The Netherlands, we contacted the Institute for Systematic and Population Biology (ISP) from the University of Amsterdam and the National Museum of Natural History (NNM) in Leiden. In Venezuela we approached the Phelps Collection in Caracas. In the Netherlands we checked a total of 15 skins (2 in ISP and 13 in NNM) of which only one showed the particular red spot in the tertials- not the red line in the greater coverts. However, both of the characters appeared in 2 skins of the Phelps Collection in Venezuela (M. Lentino, pers. comm.). Variations in color and color patterns in the plumage, particularly with respect to red coloration, are not infrrequent in many species of parrots (F. G. Stiles, pers. comm.). Several major collections in the U.S.A. will be checked in the near future to determine the frequency of these characteristics (Van der Wolf *et al* in prep).

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